

FEBRUARY 2, 1978

"BIG BUSINESS SKIING"

INTRO: AT THE WORLD ALPINE SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS IN GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN NOT ONLY THE SKIBRS ARE FIGHTING FOR MEDALS, BUT ALSO THE SKIING INDUSTRY. VOA'S DOLPH HAERING HAS THIS REPORT.

VOICE: TO PUT IT SIMPLY, THEY NEED EACH OTHER. THE BEST PUBLICITY FOR A SKI MANUFACTURER IS HIS SKIS SHOWN ON A PRIZE WINNING SKIER.

WHAT AVERAGE SKIER WOULD NOT WANT TO BUY THE SAME SKIS AS THE WORLD CHAMPION USES, - ALTHOUGH THE RESULTS WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME.

FOR THE WORLD'S BEST SKIERS, THEY COULD NOT AFFORD TRAINING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WITHOUT FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP FROM THE SKI INDUSTRY. WHO ELSE WOULD COMPENSATE THEM FOR LOSS OF INCOME DURING TRAINING, OR FOR LACK OR DELAY OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING?

THE SKI MANUFACTURERS REPORTEDLY INVEST MILLIONS OF MARKS, DOLLARS, SHILLINGS, OR FRANCS, BUT THE INVESTMENT PAYS BACK.

AFTER AUSTRIA'S FRANZ KLAMMER WON OLYMPIC GOLD TWO YEARS AGO IN INNSBRUCK, THE SKI HE USED SOLD TWICE AS WELL. THE SKI MANUFACTURER WHO SPONSORED ANNEMARIE MOSER-PROEL CLAIMED TO HAVE INCREASED HIS SALES FROM HUNDRED THOUSAND TO HALF A MILLION PAIRS AFTER SHE WON WORLD CUP AFTER WORLD CUP.

SINCE AUGUST 1976 THE SKIERS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO SIGN ADVERTISING CONTRACTS WITH MANUFACTURERS. THE MONEY INVOLVED - REPORTEDLY REACHING UP TO HALF A MILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR - MUST NOT BE USED BY THE SKIER AS LONG AS HE OR SHE IS COMPETING IN OLYMPIC GAMES OR WORLD CUP RACES AS AN AMATEUR.

VOICE: AFTER THE SEASON, THE SKIERS ARE ALLOWED TO RENEGOTIATE THEIR
(CONT'D) CONTRACTS, OR SWITCH TO SPONSORS BIDDING MORE.

SWEDEN'S SLALOM SPECIALIST INGEMAR STENMARK REMAINS ONE OF
FEW IDEALISTS ON SKIS. HE DOES NOT GO FOR BIG MONEY. NONE OF
THE LARGE SKI COMPANIES WANTED TO SPONSOR HIM EARLY IN HIS
CAREER, FIGURING HE WAS AN OUTSIDER.

SO HE SIGNED UP WITH A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN YUGOSLAV SKI
FACTORY AFTER HE WON WORLD FAME, THE BIG SKI COMPANIES TRIED
TO LURE HIM AWAY WITH HUGE FINANCIAL OFFERS. BUT THE TIGHT-
LIPPED SWEDE TURNED THEM ALL DOWN AND REMAINED LOYAL TO HIS
YUGOSLAV SPONSOR, ALTHOUGH HE IS MAKING MUCH LESS MONEY THIS
WAY. HIS YUGOSLAV SPONSOR HAS MEANWHILE INCREASED SALES
CONSIDERABLY.

OF COURSE THERE'S THE QUESTION OF WHETHER AN EXPENSIVE, TOP
QUALITY SKI IS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULTS IN SKI
RACING.

A WEST GERMAN TEAM HAS UNOFFICIALLY TESTED A TWELVE HUNDRED
MARK SKI AGAINST THE CHEAPEST PRODUCT ON THE MARKET, COSTING
ONLYTWENTY-SEVEN MARKS.

THE TESTER SKIED FASTER AND SAFER ON THE CHEAP PAIR OR SKIS.

THE TEST WAS NOT PUBLISHED IN DETAIL, SINCE IT WOULD NEITHER
HELP THE TOP SKIERS NOR THE SKIING INDUSTRY.

BUT IT MAY HELP THE NORMAL SKIER IF HE WOULD DROP THE
ILLUSION THAT WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE WORLD CHAMPION IS JUST AS
GOOD FOR HIM.

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